



LSA ENGLISH LANGUAGE INSTITUTE
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Writing Effective Email

A Workshop for International Students

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B0560 Blau Hall

Agenda

- Email Style
- Your email goals, your email identity
- Making a positive impression
- Politeness Strategies
- Email details: subject lines, greetings, closings
- Cover letter emails
- Thank you emails
- Summary/Takeaways
- Questions

Email Style

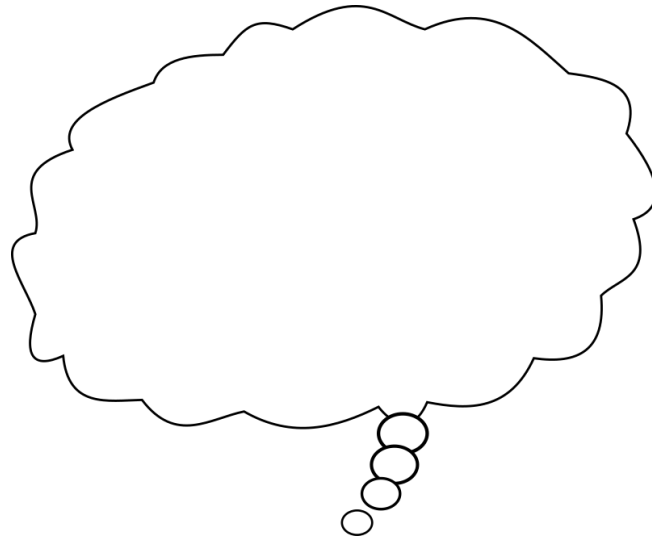
- What features of email are more like speech?



- What features are more like writing?



What are your goals for your own academic or professional email?



What does your email address say about you?



The bottom line:

Email is a key way we create a (positive) first impression.

Compose

Pause Inbox

Inbox 169

Starred

Snoozed

Important

Sent

Drafts 14

Categories

Boomerang



to me

12:20 PM (0 minutes ago)



Do you have any like opportunities for research in Ann Arbor during the Summer?

Sincerely,
[Omitted email signature]

Reply

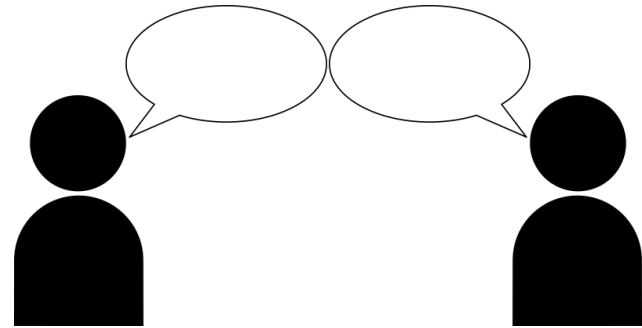
Forward

Task One: Making a Positive Impression

- How effective is the message, and why? (p. 3)
- Discuss with a partner

Conversational Cooperation Principles¹

- **Quantity:** Include the right amount of information
- **Relation:** Exclude irrelevant information
- **Manner:** Be unambiguous, clear, brief, and orderly
- **Quality:** Tell the truth



¹Grice, H.P., (1975). Logic and conversation. In: *Syntax and semantics 3 : Speech arts*, Cole et al. Retrieved from: <http://www.ucl.ac.uk/ls/studypacks/Grice-Logic.pdf>

Task One Revisited

- How well does the message in Marin Fuhrman's email in Task One follow these rules of conversational cooperation?

Politeness Strategies¹

- **Tact**: Don't ask too much.
- **Generosity**: Don't focus on *you*.
- **Sympathy**: Don't *annoy* people!

¹Leech, G., (1983). *Principles of Pragmatics*. New York: Longman.

Politeness Strategies Work!

“...when making a special request of instructors, the use of politeness strategies does, in fact, influence instructors' levels of affect toward students. In addition, our results suggest that when instructors have higher positive affect toward students, they are more motivated to work with students and have higher perceptions of students' competence and potential for success in their classrooms.”¹

¹Bolkan, S. & Holmgren, J. L. (2012). You are such a great teacher and I hate to bother you but...”: Instructors' perceptions of students and their use of email messages with varying politeness strategies, *Communication Education*, 61:3, 253-270, DOI: [10.1080/03634523.2012.667135](https://doi.org/10.1080/03634523.2012.667135) .

Task Two

- Find the politeness strategies in Katie Armstrong's message.

The Details

- Subject Lines
- Greetings
- Closings

↔ ***Purpose***

Task Three

- **Subject Lines**
- **Greetings**
- **Closings**

Additional Language for Polite Requests

- Modals
- “I was wondering whether...”
- What else can we add to this list?

Task Four: Job Search Cover Email

- What info would you include in an email cover letter to apply for an internship?

Task Five: Thank-You Emails

- What do you like about this template?
- What changes would you suggest?



Task Six: Thank-You Emails cont.

- What is your reaction to the first email?
- How effective is the second one?

Summary

- What are your key takeaways from today's workshop?

Questions?

הודו
Dankie Gracias اركش
Спасибо Merci Takk
Köszönjük Terima kasih
Grazie Dziękujemy Děkojame
Ďakujeme Vielen Dank Paldies
Kiitos Täname teid 谢谢
Thank You Tak
感謝您 Obrigado Teşekkür Ederiz
Σας Ευχαριστούμ 감사합니다
ਬੳਬਕਨ
Bedankt Děkujeme vám
ありがとうございます
Tack

Workshop Evaluation

- *Your feedback is valuable to us and will help us improve the experience of future participants. Thank you!*

bit.ly/umicorientation

